

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Finance Committee

May 28, 2008

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Time – 7:00 P.M.

Members in attendance: Chairman Joanne F. Marden, Marge Bradshaw, Tim Felter, Mary O'Donoghue, S. Jon Stumpf, Cindy Milne, Richard T. Howe and Mark Merritt.

Also present: Anthony J. Torrasi, Finance Director, Police Chief Brian Pattullo.

### **MEETING MINUTES**

1. 3/10/08 – Cindy Milne moved, Mark Merritt seconded to approve as written. Passed 8-0
2. 3/12/08 – Tim Felter moved, Mark Merritt seconded to approve with changes. Passed 8-0
3. 4/9/08 – Tim Felter moved, Mark Merritt seconded to approve with changes. Passed 8-0
4. 4/10/08 – Dick Howe moved, Tim Felter seconded to approve as written. Passed 7-0-1
5. 4/23/08 – Dick Howe moved, Cindy Milne seconded to approve with changes. Passed 6-0-2

### **TRANSFER REQUESTS**

Chief Pattullo was at this meeting to present the following transfer requests and to address questions put forth by committee members.

Tim Felter moved and Dick Howe seconded to approve transfer request #2008-7 for Public Safety-Personal Services in the amount of \$66,000.00. Following discussion committee members voted unanimously to approve the motion 8-0.

Mark Merritt moved and Tim Felter seconded to approve transfer request #2008-8 for Public Safety-Personal Services in the amount of \$35,583.00. Following discussion committee members voted to approve the motion 7-0-1.

### **PREVIEW OF END-OF-YEAR TRANSFERS**

Mr. Torrasi informed committee members of two forthcoming transfer requests in late June. He added that one request would involve transferring monies to various payroll accounts. The other request involving payroll issues in the Fire Department budget due to shortages caused by overtime running higher than expected and underestimation of retroactive wage settlements. It was noted that these requests would be presented to the Board of Selectmen at their meeting on June 30<sup>th</sup> for their approval in addition to a Finance Committee vote the same evening.

## **BUDGET PROCESS DISCUSSION**

Chairman Marden opened the floor to discussion for observations, reflections and ideas concerning this year's budget process. Observations noted included a lack of aligned vision among the three boards thus providing a possible need for facilitated workshops that would include the Finance Committee, School Committee and Board of Selectmen. Committee members entered into a lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of using facilitators and whether or not this person should be hired or brought in on a voluntary basis.

All agreed that it would be helpful for the boards to engage in forecasting the direction of Town/School budgets as well as to decide the methodology of how goals would be met in the early stages of the budget process. Ms. Silberstein urged committee members to look at each board's strengths rather than weaknesses citing advocacy as one strength the School Committee has to offer. Ms. Marden stated that even with agreement among the boards with respect to shared vision, the taxpayers must also be convinced and that budget specifics are important not only to taxpayers but to employees and Department Heads as well.

Ms. Marden suggested putting a multi-year rather than a contingency plan on the March ballot next year if there is interest in a Proposition 2 ½ Override.

Mr. Howe asked for direction from committee members on the following three budget options that would generate revenue to offset current Public Works services. They included 1) Pay As You Throw trash program; 2) leaf pickup as an optional service with the Town selling the bags; and 3) leaf compost site fee. Discussion followed regarding Finance Committee advocacy for specific budget options and it's role in the process.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Next Meeting – Monday, June 30, 2008 @ 7:00 P.M. in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room.

It was noted that this was the last meeting Marge Bradshaw would attend before her retirement from the Finance Committee. Committee members praised her work and told her she would be missed.

## **ADJOURNMENT – 9:15 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Carolyn Lynch*  
Recording Secretary